

## Exercise Instructions: High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

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*Always follow the advice of your provider (doctor/nurse practitioner/physician assistant). The instructions below are general and should only be done with their approval.*

### General Guidelines

Warm-up	10 minutes
Aerobic	30-60 minutes continuous exercise (use Rating of Perceived Exertion - see next page)
Weight Training	10-20 minutes
Cool Down	10-15 minutes
Stretching	Up to 5 minutes of light stretching

### Warm Up

Easy/light movement that prepares muscles for aerobic and/or weight training exercise.

### Aerobic

- Uses large muscle groups working together.
- Done 3-6 days per week at a moderate intensity. Over time, this should lower your blood pressure.
- This should cause an increase in heart rate (HR) and breathing rate, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation.
- Examples: walking, biking, and using a Nustep®.

Continuous exercise involves exercising at the same pace for the entire time. If unable to do 20 minutes of continuous exercise:

- Slow down and try to increase your time.
- Slowly increase intensity as you are able to increase your time.

If you can not do an entire workout at one time, try intermittent training – 20 minutes of aerobic exercise more than once a day, up to a total of 60 minutes.

### **Weight Training**

- Aim for high repetitions (reps) with light weights 2-3 days per week.
- Start with 1 set of 12-15 reps per muscle group (legs, back, chest, shoulders, and arms).
- Increase to 3 sets of 15 reps when able to tolerate.
- Strength training should only be performed after some form of aerobic warm-up.
- Be sure to breathe on the exertional part of the exercise (when you are contracting the specific muscle you are training).

**Note:** It is not safe to do isometric training (pushing or pulling against a fixed object like a wall or bar) at this time.

### **Cool Down**

Similar to the warm up; light movement to help bring your heart rate (HR) back to its resting level.

### **Flexibility/Stretching**

- Decreases muscle soreness and increases flexibility.
- Done after every workout session.
- Hold stretch up to 30 seconds (as tolerated) without moving, and be sure to keep breathing.

## PRECAUTIONS

- Your physician should clear you before you start an exercise program.
- People with known high blood pressure and heart disease/chronic heart failure may need to lower workout intensity.
- Exercise may result in fluid loss (dehydration) so drink fluids to prevent low blood pressure after exercise. Patients on fluid restriction should ask for more specific advice from their physician.

## WHEN TO CALL & WHO TO CALL

If you have any of these symptoms before or during exercise, stop exercise immediately and contact your physician:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Lightheadedness, or
- Drop of 10mmHg in blood pressure (BP) during exercise (if able to check BP while exercising)
- Anything that feels different than usual

## BORG RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION (RPE)

Use this scale to find the intensity level of your exercise. A rating of 11-13 is ideal.

6	
7	Very, Very Light
8	
9	Very Light
10	
11	Fairly Light
12	
13	Somewhat Hard
14	
15	Hard
16	
17	Very Hard
18	
19	Very, Very Hard
20	

For questions about exercise, call the exercise consultants at:

**Cardiovascular Center**

**734-936-5627**

**Cardiovascular Medicine at Domino's Farms**

**734-998-5666 or 998-7400**

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